

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY EUR:JAARMITAGE:LM

APPROVED BY EUR: JOHN A. ARMITAGE

H - MR. JENKINS

S/S - JLHOGANSON

C - JMONTGOMERY

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R 090129Z MAY 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 113177

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEWT, PFOR, CVIS, RO

SUBJECT: MFN AND JEWISH EMIGRATION

REF: STATE 109824, 110232

1. ARMITAGE (EUR) CALLED IN BOGDAN MAY 7 ON JEWISH EMIGRATION ISSUE. JENKINS (H) WAS PRESENT AND PARTICIPATED. WE GAVE BOGDAN THE LOW FIGURES NOW REPORTED FOR JEWISH EMIGRATION AND PASSPORT APPROVAL FOR MARCH AND APRIL. IN STARKEST TERMS ARMITAGE SAID THIS HAD COMPLETELY TURNED AROUND SITUATION WE NOW FACE IN SEEKING EXTENSION OF MFN. LEADERS OF AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY WHICH PREVIOUSLY HAD EXPECTED THAT ON BASIS OF SUBSTANTIAL UPWARD SURGE OF EMIGRATION AND PASSPORT APPROVALS IN LAST FEW MONTHS PRECEDING JULY, THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO SUPPORT OR AT LEAST ACQUIESCE IN EXTENSION OF MFN HAS MARKEDLY ALTERED ITS POSITION. THEY ARE PERPLEXED AND DISMAYED BY SHARP FALL-OFF IN EMIGRATION IN MARCH AND APRIL AND BY APPARENT CONTINUATION OF THIS TREND FORETOLD BY LOW LEVEL OF CONFIDENTIAL

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APPROVALS IN APRIL. THEY STATE THAT THEY CAN CHARACTERIZE THIS PERFORMANCE ONLY AS UNSATISFACTORY AND WOULD FIND IT MOST DIFFICULT TO TAKE ANY OTHER POSITION IF TREND NOT SHARPLY REVERSED. ARMITAGE SAID LATEST INFORMATION MAKES

SITUATION ACUTE AND SUGGESTS NEED FOR URGENT HIGH LEVEL

ROMANIAN ATTENTION. WE WILL HAVE TO HAVE SOMETHING MUCH BETTER TO WORK WITH IF WE ARE TO HAVE ANY REASONABLE PROSPECT OF SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING WAIVER EXTENSION.

2. JENKINS EMPHATICALLY SECONDED THIS VIEW OF CONGRESSIONAL SITUATION. HE POINTED OUT THAT THIS LAST NEWS CAME AGAINST BACKGROUND OF EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN REGARDING STATUS OF HUNGARIAN MINORITIES ON PART OF SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF CONGRESSMEN AND OF SENATOR RIBICOFF'S FIRM STATEMENT REGARDING RAUTA CASE. EMPHASIZING THAT HE WAS NOT EQUATING THESE MATTERS WITH THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION OF EMIGRATION, JENKINS SAID KEY SUPPORTERS OF ROMANIA IN CONGRESS WERE BECOMING AWARE OF LATEST FIGURES AND EXPRESSING RESERVATIONS ABOUT PROSPECTS OF WAIVER EXTENSION UNLESS SITUATION COULD BE SHARPLY ALTERED FOR THE BETTER.

3. OUR PURPOSE WAS ONLY PARTIALLY TO ENLIST BOGDAN'S ASSISTANCE IN PRESSING FOR SHARP IMPROVEMENT IN EMIGRATION AND PASSPORT APPROVALS. WE ARE NOT CONFIDENT HE IS FORCEFUL PURVEYOR OF UNWELCOME TIDINGS BUT WE BELIEVE THAT WE SHOOK HIS COMPLACENCY AND THAT AT A MINIMUM HE WILL NOW INFORM BUCHAREST THAT THERE ARE FEW IF ANY PROBLEMS WITH OBTAINING CONGRESSIONAL EXTENSION OF WAIVER.

4. BOGDAN DID ATTEMPT HIS USUAL DEFENSE OF ROMANIAN POLICY AS UNCHANGING, ALLUDED TO INEVITABLE FALL-OFF OF NUMBER OF APPLICANTS AT SOME STAGE AND TOOK EXCEPTION TO ANY CONCLUSIONS THAT MARCH-APRIL FIGURES REPRESENTED DELIBERATE OFFICIAL ACTS OR INTENTIONS. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT MOTIVATIONS OF THOSE SEEKING TO INJECT HUNGARIAN MINORITIES QUESTION INTO OUR RELATIONS AND IMPLIED COMPLICITY WITH THOSE WHO MIGHT NOT WISH ROMANIAN WELL POLITICALLY. JENKINS INFORMED HIM OF CONFIDENTIAL

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OUR CONVERSATION WITH HUNGARIAN-AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES (PARA 5) AND NOTED THAT WE HAD MADE CLEAR US NATIONAL INTEREST IN CONTINUING FIRMLY TO SUPPORT IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH ROMANIA AND EMPHASIZED THAT EXPRESSIONS OF HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS COULD BEST FIND SOME RESPONSE IN CONTEXT OF IMPROVED RELATIONS. WE DID, HOWEVER, MAKE CLEAR TO BOGDAN THAT GROUPS EXPRESSING THAT CONCERN WERE "STAINCHEST ANTI-COMMUNISTS" AND THAT US GOVERNMENT COULD NOT DISMISS THEM AS TOOLS OF OTHER

POWERS OR REJECT THEIR EXPRESSIONS OF HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS. WE SUPPORT ROMANIAN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY WITHOUT QUALIFICATION AND THERE SHOULD BE NO DOUBT

OR MISINTERPRETATIONS IN THIS REGARD. WE AGAIN UNDER-
LINED THAT THIS PROBLEM WAS OF COMPLETE DIFFERENT
NATURE THAN PROBLEM OF EMIGRATION AND CONCLUDED BY
STRESSING NEED FOR HIGHLY SATISFACTORY DATA ON EMIGRATION
AND PASSPORT APPROVAL IN NEXT SUCCEEDING WEEKS. JENKINS
ALSO NOTED THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTENTION TO CASES OF
PARTICULAR CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN AND UNDERTOOK TO PROVIDE
BOGDAN WITH SOME SPECIFICS IN THIS REGARD.

5. ON MAY 6 TWO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HUNGARIAN-
AMERICAN FEDERATION (SZAZ AND MAJOROS) CALLED ON
DEPARTMENT OFFICERS (ARMITAGE AND JENKINS) TO RESTATE WELL
KNOWN POSITION OF FEDERATION PROTESTING TREATMENT OF
HUNGARIAN MINORITY IN ROMANIA. IN AMIABLE BUT CANDID
EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, DEPARTMENT OFFICERS POINTED OUT THAT
USG FULLY UNDERSTANDS AND SYMPATHIZES WITH THE DEEP
FEELINGS OF AMERICANS OF EE DESCENT WHO LAMENT LACK
OF CIVIL LIBERTIES IN LANDS OF THEIR ORIGIN. SZAZ AND
MAJOROS WERE INFORMED THAT SUBJECT OF TREATMENT OF
MINORITIES HAS AS PROMISED BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE
GOR AT VARIOUS LEVELS, AND THAT DEPARTMENT FULLY INTENDS
TO CONTINUE TO REMIND THE ROMANIANS OF THE CONCERN IN
THIS COUNTRY ABOUT THIS MATTER. ARMITAGE AND JENKINS
ALSO POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT OUR REPRESENTATIONS CAN
ONLY HAVE AN EFFECT OVER A PERIOD OF TIME, AND ONLY IN
A CONTEXT OF REASONABLY GOOD BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH
ROMANIA WHICH PERMITS A CONTINUING DIALOGUE. CONFRON-
TATION WOULD BRING ONLY THE OPPOSITE OF THE EFFECT WE
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ALL DESIRE, THEY STRESSED. WE ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE
TO ROMANIA'S POLICY OF STRENGTHENING ITS NATIONAL
INDEPENDENCE AND RESISTING EXTERNAL DOMINATION. SZAZ
AND MAJOROS EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR US REPRESENTA-
TIONS AND SUPPORT FOR OVERALL US POLICY TOWARD EE,
INCLUDING EXPENSION OF TRADE WITH ALL COUNTRIES OF THE
AREA INCLUDING ROMANIA. THEY SEEM DETERMINED, HOWEVER,
TO CONTINUE TO SEEK TO UTILIZE CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF
THE TRADE AGREEMENT TO MAINTAIN "LEVERAGE" ON THE GOR
ON THE MINORITIES' ISSUE.
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